

Message Text

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SUBJ: ANALYSIS OF APRIL 13 ELECTIONS IN FUKUOKA'S CONSULAR DISTRICT

REF: FUKUOKA'S A-06 OF MARCH 20 AND A-07 OF APRIL 1

SUMMARY: CONSERVATIVE INCUMBENTS WON EVERY ONE OF FIVE
GUBERNATORIAL REACES IN KYUSHU. WHEN PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY
ELECTION ARE CONSIDERED, ALONG WITH THOSE FOR GOVERNOR,
CONSERVATIVES DID VERY WELL INDEED. KOMEITO ALSO WAS A BIG WINNER,
WHILE THE JSP AND JCP DID MUCH WORSE THAN EXPECTED, AND THE

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JOINT STRUGGLES WERE A FAILURE. WE ATTRIBUTE THESE VICTORIES
TO FACT THAT CONSERVATIVES WERE PLAINLY SCARED AFTER DISASTROUS
SHOWINGS IN LAST NATIONAL ELECTIONS AND CAMPAIGNED HARD AND
EFFECTIVELY. IN ADDITION, THEY SUCCESSFULLY PRE-EMPTED SOME
OF LEFTIST ISSUES SUCH AS POLLUTION CONTROL. ELECTIONS, WE THINK,
ILLUSTRATE BEDROCK CONSERVATISM IN WESTERN JAPAN, SINCE EVEN
SAGA, WHOSE INCUMBENT GOVERNOR IS INEFFECTIVE, WON. IT ALSO
SEEMS TO PROVE THAT IF CONSERVATIVES CAN GET ABLE CANDIDATES
SUCH AS FUKUOKA'S KAMEI, THEY CAN WIN AGAINST ROUGH COMPETITION
IN AREAS WHICH ARE RELATIVELY REFORMIST. FINALLY, IT MAY
INDICATE THAT THE CONSERVATIVE POLITICAL MOVEMENT IN WESTERN
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JAPAN ISN'T AS SICK AS SO MAY PEOPLE HAD TOLD US. END SUMMARY.

VOTING RATES WERE UP OVER 1971 ELECTION IN EVERY PREFECTURE EXCEPT FUKUOKA, WITH A HIGH OF OVER EIGHTY-SIX PERCENT IN SAGA. AS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ECONOMIC BACKERS OF THE LDP SAID THE NEXT MORNING, "IT PROVES THAT THE SITUATION IN KYUSHU IS DIFFERENT FROM TOKYO AND OSAKA." NOT ONLY DID THE CONSERVATIVES WIN EVERY GUBERNATORIAL ELECTION, THEY DID SO BY UNEXPECTEDLY LARGE MARGINS. FUKUOKA'S KAMEI, FOR EXAMPLE, WON 63.2 PERCENT OF THE VOTE AGAINST A JCP/JSP SPONSORED

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CANDIDATE. EVEN IN SAGA, WHICH HAD BEEN THOUGHT FIFTY-FIFTY THE DAY BEFORE THE ELECTION, INCUMBENT SUNAO IDEDA GOT 55 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. WHY DID THEY DO SO WELL? WE THINK ONE REASON IS THE POWER OF INCUMBENCY AND THE DIFFICULTY OF DISLODGING AN INCUMBENT. IN ADDITION, THE CONSERVATIVES CAMPAIGNED EXTREMELY HARD THIS TIME, AND PAID MORE ATTENTION TO DETAILS. THE CONSERVATIVES WERE ALSO CAREFUL TO PRE-EMPT THE JCP AND JSP ON SUCH MATTERS AS WELFARE AND ENVIRONMENT, WHICH REMOVED SOME POWERFUL WEAPONS FROM THE OPPOSITION. FINALLY, THE HIGH QUALITY OF SOME OF THE GOVERNORS, NOTABLY FUKUOKA'S KAMEI AND KAGOSHIMA'S KANEMARU, WAS A DEFINITE PLUS.

A FINAL FACTOR THAT HELPED THE CONSERVATIVES AND HURT THE JSP AND JCP WAS THE FAILURE OF THE JOINT STRUGGLE. EVEN IN THOSE AREAS WHEN SUCH AN EFFORT OSTENSIBLY EXISTED, IT WAS NOT VERY EFFECTIVE. FOR EXAMPLE, IN FUKUOKA AND SAGA PREFECTURES THE LEFTISTS CONCENTRATED ON ONE CANDIDATE, BUT A BASIC DISTRUST AMONG THEM PREVENTED THE EFFORT FROM BEING VERY EFFECTIVE. ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE A ONE-SHOT PHENOMENON, WE SEE THE RESULTS OF THE PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS AS BEING PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT. ALTHOUGH THE NUMBER OF LDP ASSEMBLYMEN IN THE

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PREFECTURES OF THE CONSULAR DISTRICT DECLINED FROM 270 TO 239, 61 OF 68 INDEPENDENTS ARE CLEARLY OF A CONSERVATIVE BENT, AND CONSERVATIVES CONTROL WELL OVER HALF OF 470 SEATS IN THE CONSULAR DISTRICT. THE NUMBER OF PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLYMEN IN FUKUOKA AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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KUMAMOTO PREFECTURES ACTUALLY INCREASED. IN ADDITION TO THE RECORD OF THEIR SOCIALIST-BACKED GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES, THE JSP TOOK A REAL BEATING IN THE PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY RACES, DECLINING FROM 72 TO 55 SEATS. THE INTERNAL FEUDS IN THE PARTY AND THEIR POOR SHOWING SEEM TO INDICATE THAT THE DECLINE OF THE JSP IN WESTERN JAPAN, WHICH HAS BEEN GOING ON FOR SEVERAL YEARS, IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE. IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT THE JCP KEPT ITS TEN PREFECTURAL

ASSEMBLY SEATS WITHIN THE CONSULAR DISTRICT, WE WOULD ARGUE THAT THEY, TOO, WERE HARD HIT BY THE ELECTION. FOR EXAMPLE, IN FUKUOKA PREFECTURE, THERE WERE MORE POSTERS FOR JCP CANDIDATES THAN ALL OTHER COMBINED AND THE PARTY CAMPAIGNED VERY HARD, BUT IT ACTUALLY DECREASED FROM 4 SEATS TO 3. IN NAGASAKI, THE COMMUNISTS LOST THEIR ONLY PREFECTURAL ASSEMBLY SEAT, MAKING IT, ALONG WITH SAGA, A PREFECTURE IN WHICH THEY HAVE NO SEATS AT ALL. WE ARE NOT QUITE SURE OF THE REASON FOR THIS, ALTHOUGH

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THE DOWA PROBLEM AND THE BITTER RIVALRY WITH THE JSP DOUBTLESS PLAYED A LARGE PART.

BY FAR THE LARGEST GAIN MADE BY A SINGLE PARTY WAS THAT POSTED BY KOMEITO. THEY WENT FROM 13 TO 30 TOTAL SEATS, AND ELECTED SOME ENERGETIC YOUNG MEN WHO SHOULD BE AROUND FOR MANY YEARS. WHILE GOOD ORGANIZATION IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD IS A MAJOR REASON, WE ALSO FEEL THAT KOMEITO GAVE MANY VOTERS WHO ARE TIRED OF THE LDP A RESPECTABLE ALTERNATIVE TO THE SOCIALISTS OR COMMUNISTS.

THE DSP WAS THE ONLY OTHER PARTY TO POST A GAIN IN THE ELCTION, GOING FROM 20 SEATS TO 21, THIS IS THE FIRST GOOD NEWS THE PARTY HAS HAD IN WESTERN JAPAN FOR MANY YEARS, AND THEY ARE DOUBTLESS HEARTENED BY THEIR PERFORMANCE.

COMMENT: IT MAY BE READING TOO MUCH INTO THE ELECTIONS, BUT THE GOOD SHOWING BY CONSERVATIVES, THE FAILURE OF THE JOINT STRUGGLE, AND THE HALT OF THE JSP GAINS SEEMS SIGNIFICANT VIS-A-VIS THE FUTURE POLITICAL PICTURE IN KYUSHU AND YAMAGUCHI. THE MORIBUND DSP HAS AT LEAST GAINED SOME BREATHING SPACE IN WESTERN JAPAN, AND KOMEITO IS, MORE THAN EVER, A FORCE TO BE RECKONED WITH.

RICHARDSON

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